

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for producing synthetic silica glass, said method comprising the steps of:
 - [a)] forming a gas stream containing a vaporizable initial substance which can be converted into SiO_2 by means of oxidation or flame hydrolysis,
 - [b)] supplying the gas stream to a reaction zone in which the initial substance is converted so as to form amorphous SiO_2 particles,
 - [e)] depositing the amorphous SiO_2 particles on a support so as to form an SiO_2 layer,
 - [d)] vitrifying the SiO_2 layer either during or following deposition of the SiO_2 particles to obtain the silica glass, wherein
 - [e)] the initial substance comprises a mixture of a monomeric silicon compound containing no more than one ~~[a singular]~~ Si atom per molecule thereof and of an oligomeric silicon compound containing a plurality of ~~[several]~~ Si atoms in each molecule thereof ~~[is used as the initial substance, with the proviso that]~~ the silicon in the oligomeric silicon compound in the mixture constituting ~~[contributes]~~ less than 70% ~~[to the]~~ of a total silicon content of the initial substance.
2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the silicon in the oligomeric silicon compound in the mixture constitutes ~~[contributes]~~ less than 60% to the total silicon content.
3. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the silicon in the oligomeric silicon compound in the mixture constitutes ~~[contributes]~~ at least 30% to the total silicon content.

4. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein [~~a polyalkylsiloxane is used as~~] the oligomeric silicon compound is a polyalkylsiloxane.
5. (currently amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein the polyalkylsiloxane is an octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane (OMCTS) or a decamethylcyclopentasiloxane (DMCPS).
6. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein [~~a chlorine-free alkoxysilane is used as~~] the monomeric silicon compound is a chlorine-free alkoxysilane.
7. (currently amended) The method according to claim 6, wherein the alkoxysilane is methyltrimethoxysilane (MTMS) or a tetramethoxysilane (TMS).
8. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein [~~silicon tetrachloride (SiCl₄) is used as~~] the monomeric silicon compound is silicon tetrachloride (SiCl₄).
9. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the oligomeric silicon compound is an octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane (OMCTS) and the monomeric silicon compound is methyltrimethoxysilane (MTMS);
the [a] mixture having MTMS and OMCTS therein in respective mixing amounts such that [is used in which the] a ratio of the mixing amounts of MTMS and OMCTS, based on [the] a molecular silicon amount thereof, is in the range of 40:60 to 60:40[, preferably around 45:55].
10. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the oligomeric silicon compound is an octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane (OMCTS) and the monomeric silicon compound is silicon tetrachloride (SiCl₄); and
the [a] mixture having SiCl₄ and OMCTS therein in respective mixing amounts such that [is used in which the] a ratio of the mixing amounts of SiCl₄ and OMCTS, based on [the] a molecular silicon amount thereof, is between 30:70 and 70:30.

11. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the oligomeric silicon compound is a chlorine-free silicon compound [~~is used as the oligomeric silicon compound~~].
12. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the silicon compounds are vaporized separated from each other and that the mixture is produced before or during the [~~method~~] step [~~b~~] of supplying the gas stream to the reaction zone.
13. (new) The method according to claim 9, wherein the ratio of the mixing amounts of MTMS and OMCTS is approximately 45:55.